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IV.—INCHOATIVE OR *N*-VERBS IN GOTHIC, ETC.¹

The investigation of which the following is the main result I was led to make by a note in Morris and Skeat's *Specimens of Early English*, Part II. On p. 209, in the extract from Barbour's "Bruce" (Book VII, ll. 178-80), occurs the passage :

Till his fostir-brothir he sais,
'May I trast the me to valk,
Till I a litill slepyng tak?'

In their note to these lines (p. 336), the editors say: "*Valk*, awake; used transitively. The intransitive form is *walkyn*, whence *valknyt* in l. 210. The introduction of the letter *n* renders a verb intransitive in Moeso-Gothic, Swedish, etc. Thus we have Swedish *vaka*, to watch; *vakna*, to awake."

Valk can hardly mean "wake" in this case. It would give little sense to translate, "May I trust thee to wake me till (or while) I take a little sleep?" The originally intransitive verb "wake" (of which our *valk* is another and curious spelling) seems here to have the transitive meaning "watch" (not "wake"), and the sense of the passage appears to be, "May I trust thee to watch me while I take a little sleep?"

But it is with the statement in the rest of the note that we are especially concerned. The introduction of the letter *n* does not "render a verb intransitive in Moeso-Gothic, Swedish, etc." The large class of Gothic verbs in *-nan* and the same kind of verbs in the Scandinavian languages are not intransitive in the ordinary sense, neither are they passive, as Braune calls them (p. 75 of his *Gothic Gram.*, Eng. trans.). The verb quoted in the note above, *vaka*, is itself intransitive, meaning "to be awake," and the adding of an *n* can, therefore, not *make* it intransitive. But the fact is that this *n* makes an intransitive or neuter verb *inchoative*, changing the meaning in the case of *vaka* and *vakna* from "to be awake"

¹ This is a condensation of a paper read before the Johns Hopkins University Phil. Assoc., May 2, 1884. Since then I have been engaged in other work and have not pursued the investigation any further, so that the remarks here made represent the subject as it appeared to me at the time.—A. E. E.

to "to become awake." Let me illustrate this by an example from Danish. The verb *vække* means "to wake," "to rouse from sleep," of which the passive is *vækkes* (or *blive vækket*); *vaage* is a neuter verb and means "to watch," "to be awake," and *vaagne* means "to awaken," *i. e.*, to enter into the state expressed by *vaage*. Now, one who had merely a superficial knowledge of the language might suppose that there is not much difference between the passive *vækkes* and the inchoative *vaagne*, and that they may be regarded as convertible terms. This would be a serious mistake. There is an essential difference between *vækkes* and *vaagne*, and it is this, that when *vækkes* is used one thinks of the subject of the verb as directly affected by some person or thing, while when *vaagne* is used the thought of the cause is absent or remote. When the logical subject is a person, *vækkes* only is used; when the logical subject is a thing, *vækkes* or *vaagne*; and when the logical subject is not expressed or prominent in the mind, *vaagne* alone is used. In other words, I can say *vækkes* "ab aliquo," *vækkes* or *vaagne* "aliqua re." "I was awaked by my brother" would be in Danish, *jeg vækkedes af min broder* (never *jeg vaagnede af min broder*); "I was awaked by the noise," *jeg vækkedes* or *vaagnede af larmen*; with this difference, however, that when I say *jeg vækkedes af larmen*, I think of "larmen" as the logical subject, I personify it, while in *jeg vaagnede af larmen*, "larmen" is not felt as the logical subject.

The difference between passive and inchoative verbs of the same stem (as in the case of *vækkes* and *vaagne*) is so marked in the Scandinavian languages, that I supposed it must be equally true in regard to Gothic, which contains so many inchoative verbs in *-nan*, and that Braune's statement is not very accurate when he says (Goth. Gram., p.75): "In Gothic, verbs with a passive meaning are formed by means of the suffix *-no*," etc. Contrasting this statement with what he says of the medio-passive verbs, one is left to himself to find out which are the more truly passive, the latter or the verbs in *-nan*. The last verb of those he mentions, *ga-dauthnan*, he translates "to be put to death" (German text, *getötet werden*), "to die," the latter being the only correct definition. Bernhardt also wrongly defines it as "getötet werden." The verb *ga-dauthnan* occurs over 20 times in Ulfilas, and in every case but one it translates ἀποθνήσκειν; in the one instance (Mark ix 48) it translates τελευτᾶν, which means the same thing.

To satisfy myself, I read through the whole of Massmann's

Ulfilas and noted every case of the use of verbs in *-nan*,¹ and I found my supposition to be true, namely, that the verbs in question generally translate Greek neuter and medial verbs (the Latin text often having inchoative verbs); and while they also frequently render passive verbs, I found not a single example where a logical subject is expressed or understood, which we have seen makes all the difference in regard to Danish *vaagne* and *vækkes*.

Below I give an alphabetical list of the *n*-verbs in Gothic, together with a reference to all the verses where each occurs. In parenthesis I add, for comparison, corresponding verbs from the Scandinavian. I first give the verbs most typical of the class, or those in which the inchoative idea is most clearly felt.

auknan (Norw. *aukna*), Col. ii 19. bi-auknan, I Thess. iv 10.

ga-blindnan,² II Cor. iii 14. and-bundnan, Mark vii 35. us-bruknan (cf. Norw. and O. N. *brotna*), Rom. xi 17, 19, 20.

af-daubnan (cf. Norw. *dauvna*, *dovna*; O. N. *dofna*; Swed. *domna*), II Cor. iii 14. ga-dauthnan (cf. Norw. *daana*, to faint; O. N. *dá*, a swoon, "the root-word of *deyja*, *dauðr*," Cleasby-Vigfusson), Matt. viii 32; Mark v 39; ix 48; xii 19, 21; Luke viii 49; xx 28, 29, 32; Joh. vi 50, 58; viii 21, 24, 52, 53; xi 21, 25, 26, 37; Rom. vii 6, 10; I Cor. xv 22; Col. iii 3. mith-ga-dauthnan, II Tim. ii 11. af-dôbnan, Luke iv 35. drôbnan, II Thess. ii 2. (The reading is uncertain; Massmann and Heyne give *drobnan*; Bernhardt, *ga-drobnan*). ga-drôbnan, Luke i 12; Joh. xii 27. in-drôbnan, Joh. xiii 21; xiv 1, 27. af-dumbnan, Mark iv 39. ga-frisahtnan,³ Gal. iv 19.

fullnan (Norw. and O. N. *fullna*, trans.), Luke ii 40; Eph. iii 19; Col. i 9. ga-fullnan, Mark iv 37; Luke i 41, 67; viii 23. ufar-fullnan,⁴ I Cor. xv 58. us-fullnan, Matt. xxvii 9; Mark i 15; xiv 49; xv 28; Luke i 23, 57; ii 6, 21, 22; iv 21; ix 51; xiv 23; Joh. iii 29; xii 38; xv 25; xviii 9, 32; Skeireins iv, l. 1.

us-geisnan, Mark ii 12; v 42; ix 15; x 26; xvi 5; Luke ii 47; viii 56; II Cor. v 13. us-gutnan, Matt. ix 17; Mark ii 22; Luke v 37.

ga-hailnan, Matt. viii 8, 13; Mark v 29; Luke vii 7; viii 47. us-háuhnan, 2 Thess. i 12.

¹ *ga-blindnan*, *ga-frisahtnan*, and *silda-leiknan*, verbs not occurring in Massmann, I have supplied from other editions.

² *gablinðnodedun*, marginal gloss in Codex A to *afdaubnodedun*.

³ *laudjai gafrisahtnai*, marginal gloss in Codex A to *gabairhtjaidau*.

⁴ *ufar-fullnandans*, conjectural reading of Massmann for the MS reading *ufar-fulljandans*, given by Heyne and Bernhardt.

af-hwapnan (cf. Norw. *kvavna*, *kvamna*, *kvaavna*, *kvöarna*, *kovna*, to be smothered; O. N. *kvafna*, *kavna*), Is. lxvi 24; Mark v 13; ix 44, 46, 48; Luke viii 33. un-hwapnan, Mark ix 43, 45; Luke iii 17. dis-hnupnan, Luke v 6.

fra-kwistnan, Matt. v 29, 30; viii 25; ix 17; Mark ii 22; iv 38; Luke v 37; xv 17; Joh. vi 12; x 28; xvii 12; I Cor. viii 11; xv 18; II Cor. ii 15; Skeireins vii, l. 25 (Bernhardt). ga-kwiunan (cf. Norw. and O. N. *kvikna*), Luke xv 24, 32; Rom. vii 9; I Cor. xv 22.

and-lêtnan, Phil. i 23. af-lifnan (cf. Dan. *levne*, trans.), Luke ix 17; Joh. vi 12, 13; I Thess. iv 17; Skeireins vii, ll. 16, 24, 27 (Bernhardt). silda-leiknan,¹ II Thess. i 10. ga-luknan, Luke iv 25. us-luknan, Matt. ix 30; xxvii 52; Mark vii 35; Luke i 64; iii 21; Joh. ix 10; II Cor. vi 11. fra-lusnan (cf. Norw. *lausna*, *losna*; O. N. *losna*, to become loose), I Cor. i 18; II Cor. iv 3.

us-mêrnán, Luke v 15. mikilnan, II Cor. x 15. minznan, Skeireins iv, ll. 2, 6; vi 2.

ga-nipnan, Mark x 22.

ur-rumnan, II Cor. vi 11.

ga-skaidnan, I Cor. vii 11. dis-skritnan (cf. Norw. *skretna*, to become thin, rarefied, as cloth, clouds, etc.; also expressed by *grisna*, *gresna*), Matt. xxvii 51; Mark xv 38. bi-saulnan, Joh. xviii 28. af-slauthnan, Mark i 27; x 24; Luke iv 36. ga-staurknan (cf. Norw. and O. N. *storkna*, to become "stark," coagulate, as blood, tallow, etc.), Mark ix 18. swinthnan, Luke i 80; ii 40. ga-swinthnan,² Eph. iii 16.

af-taurnan, Luke v 36. dis-taurnan, Matt. ix 17. ga-taurnan, I Cor. xiii 8, 10; II Cor. iii 11, 13. ga-thaursnan, Mark iv 6; v. 29; xi 21; Luke viii 6; Joh. xv 6. ga-thlahsnan, Luke i 29.

ga-waknan, Luke ix 32. weihnan, Matt. vi 9.

In the following verbs the inchoative idea is not so prominent; they appear to be simply intransitive or neuter verbs:

ga-batnan (cf. Norw. and O. N. *batna*, to become better, improve), Mark vii, 11. ga-bignan, Luke i 53; II Cor. ix 11.

ga-gawairthnan, II Cor. v 20.

ga-haftnan, Luke x 11. ufar-hafnan (cf. Norw. *hovna*, *kvapna*, to become swollen), II Cor. xii 7.

¹ Conjectural reading of Upström.

² This is the reading of Codex B given by Heyne and Massmann; Codex A has *in-swinthjan*, given by Bernhardt.

managnan, II Thess. i 3; II Cor. iv 15. us-managnan II Cor. viii 2. ga-nôhnan, I Thess. iii 12. tundnan, II Cor. xi 29. in-tundnan, I Cor. vii 9.

Gabelentz and Loebe (ii², p. 102), Massmann (p. 808), and Jacob Grimm (i 854; cf., however, iv 26), also class *infeinan* and *uskeinan* with the *nan*-verbs. But, if we look closely at the verbs given above, we shall see that in every case the stem ends in a consonant;¹ *ga-kwiunan* might seem an exception, but according to Kluge (Etymol. Wörterb., s. v. *keck*), it is formed from the adjective-stem *kwiwa-*, so that it is equal to *gakwiwnan*. The same applies to inchoative verbs (in *-na*) in Scandinavian. This difference in form, besides the great difference in meaning from the typical verbs of the class, is, I think, besides what Braune states (Goth. Gr., Eng. trans., §172, n. 2; §194, n. 2), additional reason for not classing these verbs with the genuine inchoatives in *-nan*.

To be sure, it is not always easy to see the difference in meaning between the passive of a transitive verb and an *n*-verb formed from the same stem; as Gabelentz and Loebe say (ii², p. 138, 3, Anmerk. 1): "Oft kommt das Passivum neben diesen Wörtern dritter Conjugation von demselben Stamm vor, ohne dass ein wesentlicher Unterschied nachgewiesen werden könnte, so: *vaurda meina usfulljanda in mela seinamma* Luc. 1, 20, neben *usfullnoda pata gamelido* Mth. 8, 17; *ushauhjada sunus guþs þairh pata* Joh. 11, 4, neben *ushauhniþ namo frauþins* Thess. 2, 1, 12; *ni uslukaindau daurons* Neh. 7, 3, neben *haurds mis usluknoda* Cor. 1, 16, 9; *all gaveihada* Tim. 1, 4, 5, neben *veihnai namo þein* Mth. 6, 9; so *afdaupjada* Mc. 7, 10, neben *gadaupnan*; *fraletada* Luc. 6, 32 [7, 47 is evidently meant], neben *andletnan*; *merjada* Cor. 1, 15, 12, neben *usmernan*; *galairada* Joh. 7, 23, neben *galaurnan*; *mikiljada* Phil. 1, 20, neben *mikilnan*"; and yet I venture to express the belief that the Goth felt a difference in each case, although two such expressions as those quoted in the first example in the above note may be looked upon as synonymous. Thus, "John was killed by James," and "John died at the hands of James," are synonymous expressions; but who would say that "died" and "was killed" are convertible terms?² So, in regard to

¹ I do not attach much importance to this point, but nevertheless give it for what it is worth.

² [In connexion with this it may be worth while to note that most of the active verbs used as practical passives in Greek have a malign signification, such as ἀποθνήσκω, τελευτῶ, ἐκπίπτω, φεύγω. πάσχω (κακῶς πάσχω) and κακῶς ἀκούω would naturally carry with them by analogy εὖ πάσχω and καλῶς ἀκούω. One cannot help the impression of an avoidance of responsibility.—B. L. G.]

the second example above, I can easily feel the difference between "to be glorified" (passive of *hauhjan*) and "to become glorified" (*ushauhnan*). The same distinction may be made in regard to the other examples. Thus, *Xristus mērvada* (I Cor. xv 12) means "Christ is preached, proclaimed," while *usmērvoda thata waurd bi ina* (Luke v 15) means "his fame became known, got abroad," there being no reference to *who* or *what* noised it abroad. The Greek makes the same distinction, being in the first case *κηρύσσεται*, and in the second *διήχεται*.

As was shown above in regard to Danish *vækkes* over against *vaagne*, namely, that the latter cannot be used when the logical subject is a person or personified thing, so also in Gothic, although there are examples where passive verbs and verbs in *-nan* seem to be used synonymously, in no case could a verb of the latter class be used when the logical subject is a person or personified thing (expressed or clearly understood). To illustrate what I mean: If I wished to render into Gothic "the fame of him was noised abroad by the people," I could not say *usmērvoda thata waurd bi ina fram thizai thiudai*, but would have to use the passive of *usmērvan*. I am quite convinced that this is the law, and there is not one example in Ulfilas to the contrary.

The best treatment of Gothic verbs in *-nan* I have found in Grimm's *Deutsche Grammatik* (i 854; ii 166-7; iv 23-27) and in Skeat's *Moeso-Gothic Gram. and Glossary*. Skeat shows, on p. 303 of this book, as well as in his remarks under *awaken* and *waken* in his *Etymol. Dict.*, that he understands the subject well enough. It is therefore so much the more remarkable that he should make such inaccurate statements as the one criticised at the beginning of this paper; and in his Gothic Glossary, while he defines the other *n*-verbs very accurately, he gives *gawaknan* as meaning "to be awake" (in the grammatical appendix, however, it is correctly defined as "to become awake"). In the glossary to *Spec. of E. E.*, Pt. II, he also in two places, under *valknýt* and *wake*, gives the meaning of *gawaknan* as = "to be awake." To be sure, the word occurs only once in Ulfilas, namely, in Luke ix 32: *gawaknandans than gasēhwun wulthus is*, translated in the Authorized Version by "and when they were awake they saw his glory." From this single example it is, perhaps, difficult to prove that *gawaknan* means "to become awake," and not "to be awake"; but on the analogy of the majority of this class of verbs in Gothic, and the use of this verb or its equivalent in the Scandinavian lan-

guages, it is quite safe to say that the meaning must have been "to become awake." The Greek, too, will bear out this translation. It has: διαγρηγορήσαντες δὲ εἶδον τὴν δόξαν αὐτοῦ. διαγρηγορεῖν, according to Liddell and Scott, means "to be awake." But the aorist of verbs denoting a state or condition expresses the entrance into that state or condition (cf. Goodwin's Greek Gram. p. 155, n. 5), and thus διαγρηγορήσαντες will have to mean "when they had become awake." The translation of the Authorized Version is thus found not to be quite accurate, and the revisers have tried to make an improvement by putting in the word "fully," rendering the word "when they were *fully* awake."

N-verbs are very common in the Scandinavian languages, and, as in Gothic, they are formed from other verbs, usually with the vowel of the past participle, or from adjectives. The great majority of them are inchoative, as in Gothic. For comparison, I give a few verbs of this kind from the Norwegian: *besna* (to become better), *brosna* (to become brittle), *flagna*, *flakna* (to become torn), *mugna* (to become musty), *visna*, *vesna* (to become faded), *rakna* (to become rent, as cloth), *rivna*, *revna*, *ribna*, *rimna* (to burst), *ljøsna*, *ljösna*, *jøsna* (to become light), *slettna* (to become smooth), *sveigna* (to become damp), *kvitna*, *svartna*, *sjukna*, *veikna*, etc. For additional lists and a good treatment of the subject see Ivar Aasen (Norsk Grammatik, p. 274, bottom; 275, note; 277, top) and Grimm (ii 170; iv 27, 942, bottom).

One would like to infer that the Anglo-Saxon (as well as the other Germanic dialects) must also once have had a distinct class of verbs of this kind. But the introduction of an *i* (or *j*) after the *n*, making them look like verbs in *-jan* or *-njan*, where *j* and not *n* is the formative element (cf. *æfnian*, *beacnian*, etc.), seems by analogy to these to have brought about a corruption of meaning as well, rendering most of them transitive.¹

It is very difficult in Anglo-Saxon to eliminate the effect of analogy, and to tell with certainty which verbs belonged originally to this class and which did not. Thus, we find quite a number of verbs (as *brytnian*, *costnian*, by the side of *bryttian*, *costian*, etc.) where the *n* seems to be merely adventitious and to cause no change of meaning. I made a collection of several A.-S. verbs that I thought

¹ I give these remarks for what they are worth. The main object of my investigation was to show the essential difference in *meaning* between passive verbs and verbs in *-nan*, rather than to go into the history of the formation of the latter.

were once inchoative, but will give only a few, about which there can be little doubt.

brosnian (cf. Norw. *broсна*, *brotna*), Bêow. 2261 : here-pâd . . . broснаð æfter beorne. Phœnix 38 : nâfre brosniað lêaf under lyfte.

druncnian (cf. Swed. *drunkna*, Norw. *drukna*), Aelfric, Hom. ii 38, l. 7 ; ii 70, l. 27.

êacnian (Goth. *auknan*, Norw. *aukna*), Sweet's A.-S. Reader (4th ed.), p. 73, l. 417 : Efne mæden sceal geeacnian and oncennan sunu ; cf. Luke i 24, 31.

wæcnan (wæcnian), Bêow. 85 ; Finsburg Fragment, 10 ; Wanderer, 45 ; Cædmon, Christ and Satan, 604 ; Phœnix, 648.¹

Frignan and *meornan* do not belong here, because they form their preterite and past participle like strong verbs, while all genuine *n*-verbs are weak. In mod. English, I do not think there is a single instance of an *n*-verb that has retained a prevailing inchoative meaning, not even *waken* (or *awaken*) ; see Skeat's remarks on these verbs in his Etymol. Dict. In Shakespeare and the Bible *waken* and *awaken* are always transitive.

I have repeatedly called the verbs treated of in this paper by the name "inchoative." In all the works consulted on this subject I have found only one author who has used this term, namely, Wimmer (Altnordische Grammatik, übersetzt v. E. Sievers, p. 127, top). Some better name might probably be devised ; but I think this is at least more accurate than "intransitive" or "passive" ; for, as we have seen, the verbs in question are, strictly speaking, neither. Many of the verbs that we have been considering correspond exactly to the so-called inchoative verbs in Latin, as :

auknan : crescere.

af-dumbnan : obtumescere.

us-geisnan : obstupescere.

ga-staurknan : arescere.

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¹ Many more references might be given.